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AUNT SUSAN'S TROUBLES ON THE FARM

A MONOLOGUE

By
LILLIAN DAVIDSON

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AUNT SUSAN'S TROUBLES ON THE FARM

MONOLOGUE FOR A WOMAN

By

LILLIAN DAVIDSON

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AUNT SUSAN'S TROUBLES ON THE FARM

SCENE.—*Kitchen in Country Home. Aunt Susan ironing—dressed in costume of old country woman.*

AUNT SUSAN.—[*Discovered at rise.*] These men folks do beat all creation. If I couldn't do nothin' better than sleep, sleep, sleep every rainy day, I'd quit living on the farm and go to the city where folks were born lazy and people don't expect nothin' else of 'em. Why lan' sakes alive, where would we be if I slept every rainy day, I'd like to know. How would the washin' an' ironin' and bakin' an' cookin', and dish washin' and sweepin', and dustin', and mendin', an' churnin' git done. To say nothin' of feedin' the chickens, an' turkeys, an' gatherin' the eggs, and makin' preserves, and pickles an' apple-butter, an' hoin' the garden, an' carrying in the wood an' water, an' sewin', and mendin', an' patchin', and darnin'. Of course Josiah is a good enough sort if he wasn't so tarnal lazy. Why only last week I jest mentioned that I would like to have a pair of Sunday shoes and the very next time he went to town he brought me home a pair. Of course they wasn't what I wanted and didn't fit and he bought them out of my egg money, but la, you can't expect everything of a man. Well, I just must wake him up for its time to milk. [*Goes R. 2.*] Josiah—Josiah—don't you think it's about time to milk the cow? Oh dear, he is the hardest man to wake—Josiah—well then why don't you go—you're just a goin', yes, jist a goin' to sleep again. Didn't I tell you it was about time to milk the cow? Well, then go—what

did I marry you for anyway. Well, I'm glad I'm not a man. [*Goes back to ironing.*] They say it takes all kinds of people to make a world, an' I'm mighty glad I'm not one of 'em. [*Crash heard R. 1—she rushes and throws open door.*] Lan' sakes—Josiah, what do be the matter? What in the world have you been doin' anyway? What did I put the rat trap on your milk stool for? I didn't put it there to catch a fool. Josiah, go and milk that cow. Josiah—don't spill the milk. [*Goes back to ironing.*] Bother the good-for-nothing-men anyway. I don't see what use they are in the world, except to pester the life out of a body, gettin' them to do anything. [*Crash heard R. 1. She drops iron and rushes to door.*]

Well, Josiah Hopkins, you are a sight. You're enough to make a pig laugh. Huh, pigs don't laugh? Well they would if they saw you. No, don't come in here, some one might see you and they sure would be shocked. You jes' stand right there till I get you another shirt. What? The turkey gobbler? Well if I was a man I don't think I'd stand still and let a' ole pesky turkey gobbler tear my shirt clean offen my back. You wasn't stanen' still? Leastwise you wasn't runnin' as fast as that turkey gobbler. No, Josiah, don't come in here. Miss Jones may be here any minute. Oh, there's a shirt hangin' right out there behind that door. Josiah—you didn't spill the milk did you? Well I never seen sich a man. We'll be in the poor house yet. Well, whose fault is it if we are in a pretty poor house now? I'm sure it isn't mine. Now go out and finish milkin' that cow and shoo the turkey gobbler off. You surely haven't lived on a farm nigh onto seventy years and don't know that much. Well if that isn't the beatenest. [*Slams door, goes back to ironing.*] But he sure did look funny. But I'm thankful for one thing—that shirt is past mendin'! Let's see, what day of the month is it anyway? Brother Sprague's daughter Helen is going to get married the 26th, and he wanted me an' Josiah to go up, but I ain't much sot on takin' him to the city

no how. And since Brother Sprague has struck oil and has been livin' in such style, I'm afraid they'd be ashamed of Josiah, and I never ken get him to fix hisself up none. Now I ken fix up an' act so as no body would know but what I'd lived in the city all my life. Let me see, this is the 15th—no—I can tell by the almanac. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26— [*Gets almanac and turns leaves over.*] Seven days—it's a good thing I fixed over my silk dress. Now all I have to do is to trim my hat and its a bran new one, too. An' those streamers I got for it are some gorgeous—I wouldn't spile it wearin' it on the train so I had the milliner give me one of them big bandboxes to carry it in an' I guess with that and Josiah's telescope and a bundle or two, we ken get along all right. I wonder if my unbrelly will do? Well if I get enough fur my eggs next week I may buy a bran new one. They'll be surprised to see me come trippin' in jest like I'd allus lived there. [*Tries to skip across the floor.*] But whatever will I do with Josiah—I never ken get him spruced up to [*Sits.*] look like I do—well, I guess he'll be all right if I borry Deacon Judd's stove pipe hat for him. That'll jest set him off—an' it's most as good as new too. The deacon hasn't wore it more'n a dozen times in the last six years. [*Rises.*] Well, now that I've got everything settled, I'll finish my ironin' in a jiffy. [*Irons very fast.*] And then me and Josiah will commence to get ready for the weddin'. I wonder if I ought to have any orange blossoms. I guess it won't do no hurt to have just a little bunch pinned on somewhere. I think people most always have orange blossoms to a weddin'. [*Crash heard R. 1—screams, drops iron, ironing board falls, rushes to door.*] Josiah Hopkins—what are you into now? Nothin'? Well you'd better get into a barrel the way you look. What? Oh, is that all? I thought at least that you'd been hit by a Kansas cyclone, struck by lightnin' and run over by an elephant, judgin' by the way you look an' the fuss you make. Ain't you old enough yet to know enough to keep away from a cow what has a bran new calf? And I bet you

spilled every drop of that milk, too. No, Josiah, don't come in here—some one might be stoppin' in, on the way to town. You'll find a pair of overalls hangin' over in that corner. Well, there's one consolation, them pants is past mendin', too.

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Time rules us all: and life indeed is not
The thing we planned it out, ere hope was dead,
And then, we women cannot choose our lot."

In fetters—The rivals—North and South—The coy widow—A noted duelist—An old affection—The dismissal—The rivals meet—"You shall answer for this"—Farewell.

ACT II—Same Scene—1860

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With starlit banners rustling wings of night,
The knightly concourse comes."

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